

233
721 The Tuareg are herders. It does not seem that they ever knew any other stage of civilization, except hunting which is the prelude to animal husbandry. But even by judicious use of pasturage they cannot own a great number of domestic animals, and in the last analysis herding falls into the background in their means of existence. Since the country could not feed them, they had to look elsewhere for what they lacked. They therefore looked to their neighbors for the rest.

181
721 Like the majority of herders, the perpetually famished Tuareg are born warriors, because from time immemorial they have had to dispute the rich lands with the sedentary peoples. Their free life has made them independent and anarchistic. The wealth of others has not inspired any respect in them, but rather a sentiment of envy which no moral rule has been able to check. Pillage has thus been raised to the state of an institution, and the Tuareg have become masters of the trade.

721 The raid, now a continual state of war with their neighbors, may be considered the principal social achievement of the Tuareg. And thus we may see the important role that the Ahaggar Mountains play; they are not only a refuge for life, but also a refuge for brigands who want to shelter themselves from the possible investigations of their victims.

579
627 The raid is organized, even ordered, pillage. It is an institution with its rules which the antagonists respect. Its simplest form is taking the neighbor's herds; once the deed is done, the raider makes a deal with him and compromises by giving him back a certain number of animals so that he can subsist, keeping for himself what is judged to be the surplus. The complicated form occurs when the attacked man defends himself or tries to take back his property. That can lead to pitched battles and, as a consequence, dead men. From that time on, it is fratricidal war which demands blood and which creates eternal hatred.

That was what the life of the Ahaggar Tuareg was before the French occupation.